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SUGGESTED GUIDE
FOR THE USE OF
COUNTY EXTENSION AGENTS
IN STUDYING THEIR WORK

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County extension agents are the key to the cooperative extension system. The skill with which each plans and carries out his work vitally affects the progress of agriculture in the county.

They should help farm people develop programs that use their land, labor, equipment, and market facilities to the best advantage.

They must plan the work about their offices so that it will effectively support the program of the county.

Each must cooperate with other members of the staff in planning his work.

County extension agents should help voluntary local leaders plan their contributions of time and energy most effectively.

For Personal Use of

County Extension Agent

Extension Service

State of _____

WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION
EXTENSION SERVICE

Division of Field Coordination

SEP 6 1944

WHY USE THIS?

This booklet is intended for county extension agents whose objective is to give the greatest help to the most farm families with the least effort.

Planning is a mental process that every agent must carry out for himself. Nobody can do it for him. These questions are intended only as guides and memory ticklers for an orderly procedure in planning.

Planning consists primarily of:

1. Ability to see and appraise work to be done.
2. Visualization of amount of effort necessary to do the volume of work.
3. Ability to make a practical schedule of necessary work.

Time is probably the county agent's greatest asset. It can be saved by careful planning of meetings, demonstrations, exhibits, interviews, farm visits, letters, news stories, and other work. Saving time may also lead to saving energy and space.

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The succeeding pages have columns at the right for answers, comments, suggestions, and questions. This is your booklet. You don't have to show it to anyone.

I. OBJECTIVES AND PROGRAMNOTES FOR ME

OBJECTIVES

An objective is a picture of a program goal. No county program can be successful unless true objectives have been set up. Great care, therefore should be exercised in laying the foundation for a county extension program by clearly stating the objectives.

What are the general objectives of the Extension Service in your county from the viewpoint of the agents?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

Are your objectives aimed at the few major problems of the largest number of farm homes and communities?

AN OVER-ALL VIEW OF YOUR JOB

NOTES FOR ME

How can we best help our sponsoring organizations understand the fundamentals of extension work?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
5. What is the place of the sponsoring agency in developing the county program?
6. When phases of the program are being developed, how should the local representatives be chosen to work out procedures of a segment of the program?
7. How can the recommendations of college specialists be brought into the thinking of local program planners?
8. List parts of your job that might be left undone or could be more easily and better done by someone else as a part of his job?
9. What parts of your job would become unnecessary if it could be planned further ahead?
10. What do you do because it is "required" and not because it is necessary?

11. If every part of your job seems absolutely necessary, what parts of it could be simplified and be done more easily?
12. Should you have another assistant? If you had one, how would you set up his job so he could accomplish the best work?
13. Of what responsibilities could local committees relieve you?

THE LONG-TIME PROGRAM

When you set up and service long-time result demonstrations, how can you--

1. Be sure they fit into the general objectives listed on page 3?
2. Consult with subject-matter specialists to insure best use of results from experiment station and from other counties?
3. Plan for more measurable and more obvious differences between old and new?
4. Demonstrate one variable at a time?
5. Estimate more accurately how many demonstrations are needed?
6. Locate and label demonstrations more carefully to attract attention?
7. Make better records of demonstrations (picture, narrative and statistical) so they may be used in spreading practice?

8. Consult and work out with subject-matter specialists better methods of spreading practice?
9. Set up a practical plan for measuring the spread of practice?
10. Does the program have an even chance to be carried out under normal conditions?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

When it is necessary to get attention and create interest, how can the following be most effectively used in your county?

Slogans_____	Pictures_____
Cartoons_____	Demonstrations_____
Exhibits_____	Slide films_____
News stories_____	Hand-outs_____
Motion pictures_____	Others_____
Posters_____	

When it is necessary to "light up" a problem and arouse activity, how may the following be used?

Result demonstrations_____	Tours_____
Testimonials_____	Charts_____
Local records_____	Graphs_____
Meetings_____	Others_____

CREATING DESIRE AND INSURING ACTION

NOTES FOR ME

In creating desire for a practice, what is the place of the following?

1. Local leadership
2. Methods that make work simpler and easier
3. Money saving
4. Participation in method demonstration
5. Results of other farmers

How may the following be used to insure action on desired practice in your county?

1. Assuming the action will be taken
2. Making necessary materials easy to get
3. Working out pools
4. Getting enrollment in the plan
5. Setting quotas and establishing goals
6. Giving acknowledgment
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

II. THE OFFICE

NOTES FOR ME

ORGANIZATION

The county office is the county agent's place of business. We judge organizations by the way the place of business is run.

1. What part of your office work might be unnecessary? What would happen if some parts of your office work were not done?
2. Can parts of the office job be combined with some other operation to save time and energy?
3. Can any forms, postings, records, or procedures be omitted? Combined? Rearranged?
4. Is there any duplication of your work by other agents in the county, the district agent, specialists, or State office?
5. How could the office be rearranged to make work easier and simpler?
6. Could you improve the lights on the desks?
7. Can any equipment or devices be used to make the work more effective and productive?
8. If other people in the organization and community knew your problems, could they make your work easier?
- 9.

YOUR SCHEDULE

NOTES FOR ME

When you plan your weekly schedule, how can you best--

1. Work up with other members of the staff a list of necessary jobs in order of their importance?
2. Select those jobs that can be successfully done by other members of the staff?
3. Combine all jobs where possible?
4. Have your schedule typed so it will be of most use to those with whom you work?
5. Plan your dictation early enough in the morning so your secretary can more carefully plan her work for the day?
6. Allow time for members of your own staff to talk over their problems with you?

OFFICE SUPERVISION

When supervising people in your office--

1. How do you instruct your employees so they will know why work is important, the easiest and best way to do it, and be able to check their finished work?
2. What methods do you use to keep an active plan of work before your people at all times?

3. How do you encourage all employees to make suggestions and assure them careful, open-minded consideration of their offers of help?
4. How do you show that you have a genuine interest in each of the employees?
5. What is the best way to recognize good work and give credit?
6. What constitutes a good day's work for your employees?

TRAINING A NEW SECRETARY

When you train a new secretary for your office--

1. What standards do you set for the secretary in your office?
2. How do you find out what she already knows about the organization and office work?
3. How do you instruct her in proper handling of mail? Files? Callers? In the importance of accuracy? Dependability? Neatness?
4. What materials on hand in the county office can you use in this training?
5. How do you help her see the importance of her job?
6. How do you follow up and give credit for success?

STAFF MEETINGS

NOTES FOR ME

At weekly conferences of the county staff--

1. How do you keep the meetings interesting?
2. What preparation was made for your best meeting?
3. What records are made of the meetings?
4. How are developments of weekly schedules made a part of these meetings?
5. Does your office secretary sit in on the meetings?
6. When is the best time to hold these meetings?

TELEPHONE

When using the telephone how can you--

1. Be more helpful and interested in telephone conversations?
2. Return all calls received in your absence more promptly and never keep others waiting on the line if possible?
3. Keep someone within answering distance of your phone during business hours?

4. Quickly identify yourself when you first answer the phone?
5. Sound more pleasant, speak more clearly, distinctly, and naturally?
6. Ask and answer questions more tactfully and carefully?
7. Best prepare notes for long-distance calls before they are made?
8. Substitute telephone calls for field trips?

LETTERS

A letter is the photograph of the mind of the writer; therefore, when you write letters how can you--

1. Use more constructive, informative statements and thus avoid argumentative, blunt, dogmatic, or contradictory expressions?
2. Write brief letters with shorter sentences and simpler words?
3. More completely answer all questions that have been asked?
4. Restrain all criticism, either direct or implied, of any agency or program?
5. Write circular letters that catch the reader's attention?

III. FIELD WORK

The farm, the home, and the community are familiar ground to farm people. They recognize an agent's skill in working in this environment.

TRIPS

Some questions we could ask ourselves when planning trips:

1. Are all the trips I make necessary? What would happen if I didn't make this trip? Who else might do the work which requires this trip?
2. How could I arrange my schedule and combine this trip with other trips or with trips of another staff member, to save travel distance?
3. Would a well-prepared letter, telegram, or telephone call be cheaper and easier than making the trip? Would it be as effective?
4. Am I properly equipped to carry out the purpose of the trip?
5. What could I do on this trip to assist the work of other agents in the county?
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

INTERVIEWS

Properly used office interviews and farm visits are excellent extension tools.

1. How could you better clarify objectives of each interview?
 - a. Will these help?
 - Be a more eager listener.
 - Get more necessary facts.
 - Ask more leading questions.
 - Avoid jumping at conclusions.
 - Offer definite suggestions.
2. Can a better plan of presentation be developed for each farm visit?
 - a. How much of the farmer's time and your time would this save?
 - b. How could a fuller use of models, charts, and local examples speed interviews and help you do a more thorough job?
3. What are the best methods of promoting good will?
4. How can we look at our acts through the eyes of a farmer?
5. How can you better judge reactions of farmers when talking to them?
6. How do you check up on the success of your interviews?
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

MEETINGS

When you plan meetings how could you more--

1. Carefully outline the objective of the meeting?
2. Accurately determine the number and location of people who need to and probably will come?
3. Advantageously select the location of the meeting place?
4. Easily arrange for a meeting place? Readily check on heat, light, key, and janitor service?
5. Surely know exactly what the specialist, if one is helping, wants or needs to make the meeting a success?
6. Attractively work out announcements far enough ahead of time?
7. Adequately encourage all farm people to attend general meetings?
8. Skillfully get out necessary news stories about meetings?
9. Effectively encourage folks to be present on time?
10. Fully inform local leaders about ways they can help?

11. Thoroughly plan the program in detail so supplemental material can be prepared ahead of time?
12. Completely check equipment and material before leaving for a meeting?

When you conduct meetings--

1. Do you generally get there in plenty of time?
2. How could you set up equipment more easily, quickly, and effectively?
3. What could be done to get the audience to understand more clearly the purpose of the meeting?
4. How could you make your introductions more interesting and helpful to both audience and speaker?
5. When you present materials how can you tell when the group has learned?
6. What opportunity is allowed for discussion and questions?
7. What provision is made for a summary and a formal closing of the meeting on time?
8. Do you adequately report the meeting to the local press?

IV. THE INFORMATION JOB

NOTES FOR ME

Farm people are entitled to know about the activities of the county extension agents.

NEWS

In your newspaper and radio releases, how can you ~~m~~ e fully--

1. Present the true facts about the agricultural situation, as well as you are able to obtain them?
2. Prevent, whenever possible, unfair and unjust criticism of the Service?
3. Keep on lookout for news for the local paper even though it may not always have an agricultural message?
4. Hunt for successes among your leaders that would make good news?
5. Plan your news program a long time in advance?
6. Energize your news stories to make them still more interesting?
7. Utilize your local editor's and radio director's advice and counsel on your news program?
8. Use the newspapers and radio stations to help you do your educational job?
- 9.
- 10.

PICTURES

NOTES FOR ME

When you make picture records, how can you--

1. More skillfully plan "before" and "after" pictures to get visual evidence of results of practices you recommend?
2. Get close enough to the subject so the picture can tell the story?
3. More critically analyze some of the best picture magazines for ideas and suggestions that will make your pictures tell their story?
4. Plan your backgrounds to remove extraneous and unwanted material?
5. Concentrate on one point of interest to avoid confusing details?

EXHIBITS

When you prepare exhibits or method demonstration for fairs, how can you--

1. More fully isolate the idea to be presented?
2. More clearly define the purpose, outline the scope, and anticipate probable responses?
3. Decide on the most orderly sequence for presenting necessary ideas?
4. Provide special treatment for those parts difficult to understand?

5. Select the best illustrations, examples, or substantiating facts, and use them as evidence?
6. Assemble all this material into a neater, more compact, and aggressive unit?
7. Design a more practical method for evaluating the exhibit's effectiveness?
8. Interest local leaders in developing the idea and executing it to save your time and develop the leader?

REPORTS

When you write reports, how can you--

1. Have a clearer understanding of the purpose of the report, its use, for whom it is intended, and why it is requested?
2. Organize the material, select the facts, prepare an outline that emphasizes important points clearly, completely, concisely?
3. Construct clear, emphatic sentences with words easily understood by the reader?
4. Plan pictures more carefully for your annual report?
5. Use tables, charts, and illustrations to make facts more easily understood?

6. Make the report suggest action on the program?
7. Prepare a more effective summary on longer reports?
8. Get them out on time?
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.

REFERENCES AND OTHER IDEAS

V. PERSONAL CONSIDERATIONS

NOTES FOR ME

1. With long days and the inevitable night work, what do you do to keep physically fit and mentally alert?
2. In what way do you get the greatest relaxation?
3. How do you get recreation?
4. Does your enjoyment of the work help you fight fatigue? If so, how?
5. How do you keep up on your work professionally?
6. What help would you like to have on ways to keep healthier and happier in your work?
7. What personal attitudes do you cultivate that promote good will with associates?
8. Has it been your observation that good relationships reduce fatigue?
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

